

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF DECEMBER 31

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ MET INFORMALLY WITH THE PRESS DECEMBER 31. IN ADDITION TO COMMENTING EXTENSIVELY ON THE ECONOMIC SITUATION (SEPTEL), HE ALSO ANSWERED QUESTIONS ON THE POLITICAL AND LABOR SITUATIONS. HIS RESPONSES CONTAINED SOMETHING FOR ALMOST EVERYONE ALONG THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING WITH REPORTERS FOR A YEAR-END NEWS CONFERENCE, PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ AGAIN MAINTAINED THAT THE PERUVIAN REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS IS NEITHER ANTI-COMMUNIST OR ANTI-CAPITALIST. IT RESPECTS VARIOUS IDEAS OF BOTH SYSTEMS AND ACCEPTS SOME OF THEM, TAILORED FOR PERU. THE GOP IS, HOWEVER, ANTI-IMPERIALIST.

2. THE GOP BELIEVES IN PLURALISM OF IDEAS. HOWEVER, WHEN THOSE WHO ARE FREE TO EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS GO TOO FAR AND ATTEMPT TO HARM THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS, THE GOVERNMENT WILL DEFEND IT. THERE WILL BE NO BLANKET AMNESTY FOR LABOR AGITATORS AT CENTROMIN OR OTHERS WHO WENT BEYOND THE PROPER BOUNDS AND HARMED NATIONAL INTERESTS. MORALES BERMUDEZ ALSO EXPRESSED HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH THE

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IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOR POLICIES AND INDICATED THAT THERE

WOULD HAVE TO BE PROFOUND CHANGES, PARTICULARLY AS PERU ENTERS THE COMING DIFFICULT ECONOMIC YEAR.

3. THE PERUVIAN PRESIDENT LISTED THESE THREE GOALS FOR THE SECOND PHASE OF THE REVOLUTION: TO DEEPEN SOCIAL CHANGES, TO ANALYZE AND TRANSFORM THE STATE, AND TO RAISE THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE PEOPLE FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION. REFERRING TO THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS PERU FACES, HE PLEDGED "THE MORE CRISIS", THE MORE REVOLUTION".

4. AS TO GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES, MORALES BERMUDEZ SAID THERE WOULD BE THESE ON FEBRUARY 1, AND NO MORE. PRIME MINISTER VARGAS PRIETO RETIRES, BUT WILL BECOME COMPTROLLER GENERAL. GENERAL FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WILL BECOME PRIME MINISTER. INTERIOR MINISTER CAMPOS RETIRES, TO BE REPLACED BY GENERAL LUIS CISNEROS, PRESENTLY HEAD OF SINAMOS, GENERAL GERMAN VELARDE BOZANO TAKES SINAMOS. GENERAL LA VERA MOVES FROM THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINES TO BECOME THE CHIEF OF THE ARMY STAFF. GENERAL ARTURO CARLOS LA TORRE DI TOLLA WILL REPLACE HIM. BAYOVAR COMPLEX HEAD ARBULU BECOMES HEAD OF THE ARMED FORCES JOINT COMMAND AND IS REPLACED BY GENERAL JOSE SORIANO.

5. COMMENT: THIS PRESS CONFERENCE CONTAINED A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE. THOSE ON THE POLITICAL LEFT CAN TAKE COMFORT IN MORALES BERMUDEZ' REPEATED SUPPORT FOR THE IDEOLOGICAL BASES OF THE REVOLUTION AND HIS PLEDGE TO CONTINUE TO BE GUIDED BY THESE PRINCIPLES. THOSE CONCERNED WITH HOW FAR AND HOW FAST THE REVOLUTION HAS MOVED LEFT CAN APPRECIATE MORALES BERMUDEZ CALM APPROACH AND ASSURANCE THAT PLURALISM WILL CONTINUE TO BE RESPECTED IN HIS REGIME. MORALES BERMUDEZ DID NOT STRIKE OUT AT THE CGTP FOR ITS RECENT WORK STOPPAGE, BUT HE DID WARN THAT THERE ARE LIMITS TO STATE TOLERANCE AND THAT EXISTING LABOR LEGISLATION WOULD HAVE TO BETTER IMPLEMENTED. FINALLY, HIS FLAT STATEMENT THAT FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WILL BECOME PRIME MINISTER WAS BALANCED WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES WILL BE MINIMAL (AND THUS NOT UNSETTLING).
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